

TO: SCCRTC – Transportation Policy Workshop
FROM: Kim Shultz, Senior Transportation Commission
RE: Status Report on Related Highway 1 Projects

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission accept this Status Report on activities related to the Highway 1 Project.

DISCUSSION

Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project – Project Approval/Environmental Documentation (PA/ED)

The Fourth Quarterly Progress Report for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project will be presented at the September RTC meeting. As part of this progress report, Mr. Metzger will outline a timeline for the process to identify potential additional project alternatives to be studied through the PA/ED process.

One of the factors influencing consideration of additional project alternatives, are the comments received from the Public Information Meeting (scoping) meetings held in April 2004. The *Draft Public Information Summary Report (Attachment 1)* summarizes the outreach efforts and comments received at the public information meetings held on April 26 and 28, 2004. Ben Strumwasser, Public Affairs Management (subconsultant to Nolte) will make a presentation of this report at the September RTC meeting.

Staff proposes to post the Summary Report on the RTC website as a cost effective alternative to publishing a newsletter focusing primarily on the comments received at the public information meetings, as proposed in the Public Information Plan. Staff proposes instead to focus the time and resources required to publish the first newsletter on discussion of the project alternatives to be studied through the environmental process and the transfer of project responsibilities from the RTC to the Highway 1 Construction Authority.

Copies of the full Summary Report, which includes appendices containing copies of noticing materials, meeting materials, and all written public comments (an additional 155 pages) are available upon request and for public viewing at the RTC offices.

As a result of public input and comment at public meetings, staff has prepared a summary of the results of the traffic analysis for the Highway 1 Widening Project (Attachment 2) based on information presented in Caltrans *Project Study Report (PSR)* and *Traffic Analysis Report*, dated July 2002. Note, the traffic analysis presented in this summary report will be revised using AMBAG's Updated Travel Demand Model with traffic forecasts to the year 2030, as part of the PA/ED phase of the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project.

As of this writing, the project consultants and staff are still awaiting release of AMBAG's Updated Regional Travel Model to begin work on traffic projections and operational analysis.

On other fronts, the consultants and staff await comments from Caltrans on the findings of the *Extended Phase I Archaeological Report*, to determine the precise location and number of parcels for Phase II subsurface evaluation. Staff will continue to work closely with the County Real Estate Division and Caltrans to process rights-of-entry to pursue this work consistent with state and federal regulations.

The Project Development Team for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project continues to meet monthly.

Highway 1 Construction Authority

The HCA Board met on August 6th and approved the consultant evaluation committee's recommendation to begin negotiations to retain administrative/project management services with the consultant team led by S & C Engineers. A principal member of the S & C Engineers' consultant team is Eileen Goodwin, who would serve as the Executive Director of the HCA on a part-time basis. Other members of the S & C Engineers' consultant team include Kim Shultz and Dale Dennis.

The critical path for getting the consultant team on board is amending the Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans and the RTC transferring authority to the HCA to serve as the sponsoring agency for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project and eligible for reimbursement of project related expenses. John Presleigh, serving as HCA Interim Executive Director, advised that it could take up to 8 weeks to amend the Coop Agreement through Caltrans.

Given these timeframes, the HCA Board authorized negotiation of a limited contract not to exceed \$10,000 with the consultant team for the development of a public information program for the Highway 1 project, in coordination with similar efforts by the RTC for the Expenditure Plan. In the meantime, County staff were directed to work with RTC to develop an amendment to the existing Cooperative Agreement, if possible.

Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project

On August 5th, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted the recommended 2004 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) providing construction funding for the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project in FY 05/06. While this program funding is one year later than requested by the RTC, Caltrans has indicated that they will still be able to meet the current proposed construction start date of August 2005, if this programming commitment is held.

However, the 2004 STIP is subject to further adjustment once the resolution of the State Budget is fully understood, and resolution of outstanding budget trailer bills, propositions related to tribal gaming, and reauthorization of the federal transportation act. Until that time the CTC is withholding funding allocations. Through this period, staff will continue to research and monitor all options including the use of GARVEE bonds, to deliver the project in a timely and cost effective manner.

In the meantime, Caltrans is scheduled to complete right-of-way activities for easements to construct soundwalls by March 2005. Caltrans is working directly with the City of Santa Cruz on construction phasing and proposed detour routes during the construction process.

Staff will provide any updates to the project schedule at the TPW meeting as a result of the Highway 1/17 Project Development Team meeting on August 10th.

Design Build Legislation

SB 1130 (Scott)

On July 27th the Governor signed SB 1130 (Scott) extending design-build authority on transit projects to transit agencies until January 1, 2007. In extending this authority, however, the bill explicitly excludes “state highway construction or local street and road projects” as transit projects (Attachment 3).

SB 1793 (McPherson)

SB 1793 (McPherson) passed out of the Assembly Transportation Committee on August 9th in preparation for sending this bill to joint Assembly and Senate Conference Committee to allow this bill to serve as a vehicle to take a comprehensive approach at developing proposals for design build, and private financing for transportation infrastructure projects. Staff will provide any updates at the TPW meeting.

Expenditure Plan Development

The Expenditure Plan Subcommittee has provided input to the development of a public education and outreach effort for the Local Transportation Sales Tax Measure Expenditure Plan which is the subject of a separate agenda item. The County Clerk has assigned the Local Transportation Sales Tax Measure the letter “J” for identification on the November 2004 ballot.

SUMMARY

The *Draft Public Information Meeting Summary Report* (Attachment 1) will be presented by the project consultants for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project at the September RTC meeting. Staff prepared a summary of the results of the traffic analysis prepared by Caltrans for the Highway 1 Widening PSR (Attachment 2). The HCA Board has authorized negotiation to retain a consultant team for administration/project management services, and authorized a Notice to Proceed for an amount not to exceed \$10,000 to begin a Public Information Program in coordination with the RTC for the Expenditure Plan. The recent approval of the 2004 STIP will allow construction to begin on the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project in August 2005, however, program funding in the STIP is subject to further revisions once outstanding state and federal legislative and budget actions are completed. SB 1130 (Scott) extending design build authority to transit agencies was signed by the Governor, but the legislation exempts use of that authority for the construction of state highways (Attachment 3).

Attachments:

- 1) Draft Public Information Meeting Summary Report, dated July 2004.
- 2) Summary of the Traffic Analysis Results from Caltrans PSR
- 3) SB 1130 (Scott) as approved by the Governor, July 27, 2004.

Prepared by: Kim Shultz

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